

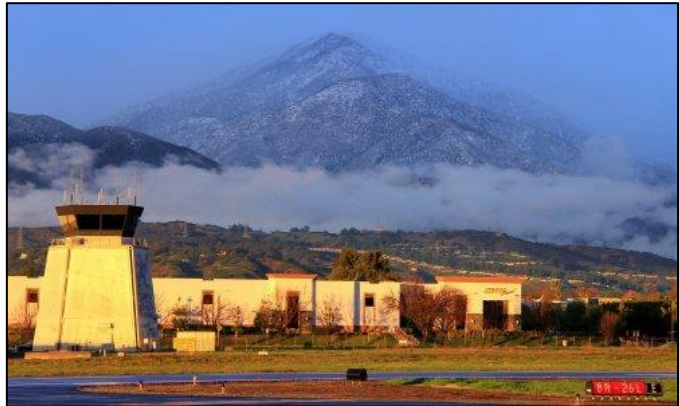
Brackett Field History

By Paul McClure

Brackett Field Airport sits 25 miles east of Los Angeles between the L.A. County Fairplex and Puddingstone Lake in the city of La Verne. The 276-acre general aviation airport provides a restaurant, flight schools, and numerous aviation related businesses.

The airport houses more than 500 aircraft and handles approximately 10,000 landings and take-offs each month on its dual runways that are 4,839 and 3,661 feet long. American Airports Corporation, under contract with the County of Los Angeles, manages the facility.

What was once a bumpy, dusty landing strip mowed out of a wheat field has grown into a bustling airport owned by the Los Angeles County and operated by American Airports Corporation.¹



Brackett Field with Mt. Baldy in the background, 2014.

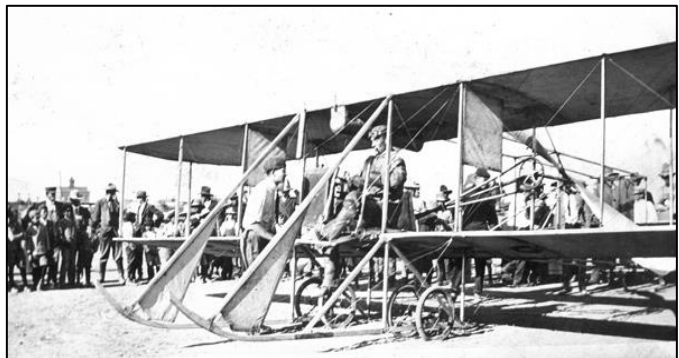
Through the Decades

1910s

In 1911, Cal Rogers landed his Wright Flyer Biplane nicknamed the “Vin Fiz” on a dirt strip in a wheat field near the site of today’s Brackett Field airport.

Publisher William Randolph Hearst had offered a \$50,000 prize to the first aviator to fly coast to coast, in either direction, in less than 30 days. Rogers bought a 35-horsepower Wright biplane and took off from Sheepshead Bay, New York. With 75 stops and 16 crashes along the way, the “Vin Fiz,” unfortunately missed the deadline by 19 days.

However Rogers’ landing area, now in the City of La Verne, had sprouted its aviation roots.



Cal Roger’s Vin Fiz Flyer on his cross-country flight, 1911.

1920s

In 1928, the W.K. Kellogg Airport opened at the cereal magnate’s winter ranch, now the site of Cal Poly, Pomona. Also in 1928, Pomona Radio store owner John Burnley leased a 20-acre field at the south end of Garey Avenue in Pomona and opened Burnley Airport.²

Whereas Kellogg Airport was a private facility, Burnley Airport was a “public, commercial field.”³

1930s

Three airports served to Pomona Valley.

Kellogg Airport: In 1932, Mr. Kellogg donated his Pomona ranch, which included the airfield to the State of California for use as a college. At that time Kellogg Airport ceased operation.⁴ When it closed, the 22 acre airfield with a grass-surface 2,300-foot runway⁵ was reportedly the largest privately built and maintained airport in the United States.



Dedication of the 60-foot tall Cal Rogers Beacon at the Kellogg Airport, 1928.

Burnley Airport: In 1935, John Burnley sold his airport to James Long and Kenneth Brooks who changed the name to Pomona Airport.⁶

Pomona Airport: The newly-renamed Pomona Airport provided a hangar, repair facilities, oil, and fuel. They also developed a training facility for student pilots from Pomona College under Civil Aeronautics Authority, part of the Civilian Flight Training program launched by the U.S. government there in 1939.⁷

1940s

Brackett Field: In 1940, James Long and Kenneth Brooks, operators of Pomona Airport, also leased about 50 acres of land from the Base Line Water Company and plowed a 2,600-foot runway out of the wheat field. That landing area, was named after Dr. Frank Brackett, a Pomona College historian, astronomer, mathematician, flying enthusiast, and author of *History of Pomona Valley, California*. The air field was “formally opened as a Civil Aeronautics Administration approved airport on October 15, 1940.”⁸



Mrs. George Kerns with a Ryan PT-22 at Pomona Airport, 1945.

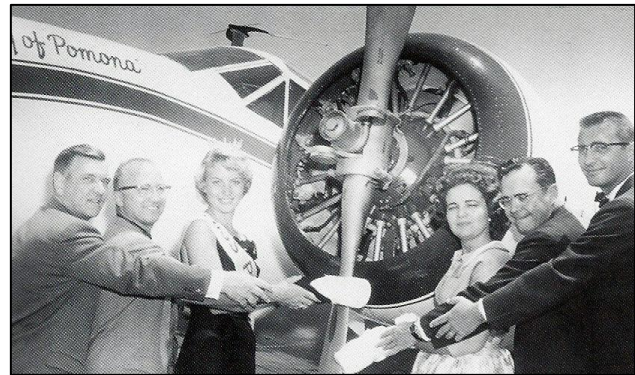
Long and Brooks built a hangar with adjoining offices and opened a

flying school, air charter company, and air freight service. The newly dedicated airport also provided flight training facilities for Pomona College civil aeronautics students.⁹

Early in World War II, the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), then an auxiliary branch of the U.S. Air Force, used Brackett Field for their operations. In 1942, “all privately-owned airplanes,

including those used by CAP members, had to be disassembled. The fuselage, wings, and motor could not be stored within seven miles of each other, a precautionary measure to prevent the craft from being stolen and used by saboteurs.”¹⁰

In 1947, the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission had recommended that the County acquire Brackett Field in order to qualify for federal development funds; however, their efforts were unsuccessful at that time.¹¹



Miss Pomona Gail Lindhorst, Pomona Mayor Arthur Cox, and others dedicate Holiday Airways twin-engine *City of Pomona* that made regular flights to Long Beach and Catalina, 1960.

1950s

In 1950, the Pomona Airport closed leaving Brackett Field to serve the area.¹²

In 1953, Los Angeles County filed suit to acquire 170 acres needed to expand Brackett Field.¹³ Also that year, the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) approved Mt. San Antonio College's Air & Industry Technology program at Brackett Field that included training for pilots, maintenance technicians, and even stewardesses.

By 1957, the County's acquisition of land was completed, the U.S. Department of Commerce allocated one-half million dollars for development, and construction began.¹⁴

In August 1958, Brackett Field was dedicated as a Los Angeles County airport.¹⁵ Land was then leased to fixed-base operators, flight schools, charter firms, flying services (fuel, oils, and lubricants), parts and maintenance shops, and aircraft vendors.

The airport used the latest 1950s technology: two-way radios, a teletype weather reporting service, field lighting for night operations, and a direct communications phone with the Civil Aeronautics Administration's (CAA) installation at Ontario International Airport.



Golden West commuter plane that connected to Continental Airlines at LAX, 1968.

1960s

During the 1960s, runway 26/8 was paved, taxiways were added, a control tower was built, and more hangars and tie-downs for aircraft were provided to meet demand.

In 1960, George Petterson opened Brackett Field Aircraft Service, the first full-service fixed base operator (FBO) with aircraft maintenance, flight school, fuel service, 40 tee hangars, and other storage.

Also in 1960, Martin Industries established Brackett's first commuter service with daily flights to Santa Catalina Island, but they went out of business within the year.

In the early months of 1961, the Federal Aeronautics Administration authorized a FAA-operated flight control tower to be built on the north side of the runway.¹⁶



Airport 1975 was one of several movies or television shows shot, in part, at Brackett Field, 1975.

A Piper dealership erected a large, wooden hangar on the north side of the field. Twice it burned down and, eventually, the building was demolished.

In 1968, Golden-West Airlines offered six flights daily connecting to Continental Airlines at Los Angeles International, but they too shut down within a year.

1970s

In 1972, Los Angeles County bought out (through condemnation) the FBO, Brackett Field Air Service.

In 1974, Brackett Field was set to be the starting point of the Powder Puff Derby—an annual transcontinental air race for women pilots, but that race was cancelled because of a nation-wide fuel shortage. By 1977, rising costs, insurance premiums, and diminished corporate sponsorship caused the women pilots' competition to end.

Development began on the south side of the field: an administration building, a Cessna dealership, flying schools, metal hangars, and other facilities.

In addition, Hollywood had discovered Brackett Field and used the site to film scenes from *One Embezzlement and Two Margaritas* (1965), *Cloudbusters* (1966), *The Invaders* (1966), *Wings of Fire* (1967), *The Tim Conway Show* (1970), *Spencer's Pilots* (1974–1975), *Airport 1975* (1975), and others.

1980s

Residential development of land throughout Los Angeles County caused many general aviation airports to close, which increased traffic at Brackett Field. That demand led to construction of a second runway (26R/8L) and the consequent relocation of the control tower moved to accommodate the new runway.

By this time, Los County airports included:

- Fox Field, Lancaster
- Brackett Field, La Verne
- Whiteman Airport, Pacoima
- Compton/Woodley Airport, Compton



Brackett Field now serves as an aviation safety hub housing aircraft for the Civil Air Patrol, the Pomona Police Department, and the Los Angeles County Fire Department, 2014.

- San Gabriel Valley Airport, El Monte
- Parker Aero development lease constructed 48 rectangular aircraft storage hangars in September of 1983.

1990s

In 1991, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors awarded a contract to Comarco, Inc., a privately-owned firm, for the operation and maintenance of the County's five airports. The goals in privatizing management were increased efficiency for the airport and increased revenue for the County.¹⁷

In 2002, American Airports Corp¹⁸ took over the airport administration contract.

The functions provided by the private operator include (1) aircraft fueling, (2) safety and security, (3) facilities and equipment maintenance, (4) property management (leases, permits, and other airport use agreements), and (5) public relations.¹⁹

Even with a private company to look after day-to-day operations, the Los Angeles County Aviation Division—located at the Public Works headquarters in Alhambra—continued to retain responsibility for the planning and development, capital improvement, acquisition of federal and state grants, and compliance with applicable Federal, State, and local rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.²⁰



Brackett Field Administration Building, 2014.

2000s

By the 2000s, Brackett Field airport became a thriving pilot training facility with several flight schools. In 2000, annual airport operations had climbed to 252,416.²¹

In 2007, Brackett Hangar, LLC, signed a 30-year lease for eight acres on which to develop 105,844 square feet of new-construction aircraft hangars and related aviation office facilities. However, the recession of 2008 delayed construction.

In 2007, Los Angeles County Fire Department began basing based helicopters at the airport and in 2008 the County Sheriff's Department did the same. The Pomona Police Department continued to base their helicopters at Brackett Field, and the Civil Air Patrol, also based aircraft at the airport.

In 2008, President Barack Obama made his first use of the airport when he visited Southern California.

An airport perimeter road was completed during the 2000s.



Numerous aviation related businesses operate in the Brackett Air Business Park on the south side of the airport, 2014.

2010s

In 2001, a new GPS aircraft approach was approved, an AWOS weather station put into operation, and a new gate access system installed.

Quality AvFuel Jet A and 100LL AvGas became available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, enabling pilots to self-serve or call for a fuel truck.

In 2014, President Barack Obama used Brackett Field when he visited to declare the San Gabriel Mountains a national monument. The goal was to establish “346,177 acres of national forest land in the San Gabriel Mountains in southern California as a national monument, permanently protecting the popular outdoor recreation destination to increase access and outdoor opportunities for the area's residents.”²²



President Barack Obama landed at Brackett Field to declare the San Gabriel Mountains to be a National Monument, 2014

Conclusion

Brackett Field found its beginning as a dirt strip in a grain field and has grown into a county-owned, reliever airport of major importance to the local region.

Today “Brackett Field Airport safely and efficiently accommodates a wide array of fixed-wing and rotary-wing general aviation aircraft ranging from small two-seat, single-engine propeller aircraft to much larger and higher capacity turbo-prop and jet aircraft.”²³

The control tower operates daily and the field is equipped with “runway end identifier lights (REILs), pilot controlled medium-intensity runway lighting (MIRLs), precision approach path indicators (PAPIs), and an instrument landing system (ILS) on the south runway, full and self-service fueling services (JetA and 100LL) are available around the clock, and advanced weather reporting equipment such as the recently installed state-of-the-art Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS).”²⁴



New hangar and flight school constructed along Fairplex Drive on the east side of Brackett Field, 2014.

Airport Statistics

Size—276 acres
Call Letters—POC
Elevation—1101 feet
Airport Type—Public
City—La Verne, California
Aircraft—approximately 480
Tie-Downs—Approximately 100
Rental Hangars—approximately 400
Operator—The County of Los Angeles
Coordinates—34°05'29.93"N 117°46'54.4"W
Activity—approximately 250,000 landings and takeoffs per year
Runways—8L/26R, 3,662 feet long, 75 feet wide, asphalt surface
8R/26L, 4,839 feet long, 75 feet wide, asphalt surface

Contributors

Thank you to the following people have contributed to this history of Bracket Field:

- **Jason Morgan**, Assistant Chief, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Aviation Division
- **George Petterson**, former Fixed Base Operator and airport developer
- **Robert Rogus**, Co-Chairman Aeronautics Department, Mt. San Antonio College
- **David Todd**, Supervisor of Flight Training, Aeronautics Department, Mt. San Antonio College
- **Kathy Touché**, Owner, Norm's Hangar Coffee Shop
- **Aaron Walsh**, Airport Project Coordinator, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Aviation Division
- **Cyle Woodruff**, Brackett Field Airport Manager, American Airports Corporation

Vin Fiz Flyer

1911

In 1911, Calbraith Perry Rogers landed his biplane, nicknamed the “Vin Fiz,” near what is now **Brackett Field** on the first U.S. cross-country flight.

Rogers, the 6'4" cigar chomping grandnephew of U.S. Navy Commodore Oliver Perry (hero of the 1812 Battle of Lake Erie) had 90 minutes of instruction from Orville Wright. He then took off in a linen-covered, spruce-framed biplane with a 35 horsepower water-cooled motor and two chain-driven eight-foot pusher propellers on his epic 4,000 mile flight from Sheepshead Bay, New York to Long Beach, California.²⁵

Rogers was in pursuit of a \$50,000 prize offered by publisher William Randolph Hearst for the first person to fly from coast to coast in less than 30 days. Meatpacker J. Ogden Armour sponsored the flight and named the plane after his new grape soft drink Vin Fiz.

Rogers used railroad tracks (the so-called “iron compass”) for navigation. He was accompanied by a three-car train that transported fuel, spare parts, two mechanics, two assistants, and his wife Mabel.

First Coast-to-Coast

The flight took off on September 17, 1911, made 75 stops along the way, and crashed 16 times. The plane was repaired so often that only a few pieces of the original plane actually made the entire trip.

On November 5, 1911, Rogers landed in Pasadena before a crowd of 20,000, having missed the prize deadline by 19 days. The next day he took off for Long Beach, but crashed in Compton suffering a brain concussion and spinal twist that led to three weeks of hospitalization. Finally, on December 10 he landed in Long Beach and taxied the Vin Fiz Flyer into the Pacific Ocean, completing the unprecedented journey with 84 hours of actual flying time.

Five months later on April 3, 1912, while putting on a flying exhibition just a few hundred feet from where the Vin Fiz Flyer completed its transcontinental flight, Rogers flew into a flock of birds, crashed, and died.²⁶ He was 33 years old.



Cal Rogers, Vin Fiz Flyer pilot,
first to fly from coast to coast,
1911.



Cal Rogers last flight, 1912.

Powder Puff Derby

1929

Humorist and aviation advocate Will Rogers coined the term Powder Puff Derby to describe the first women's flying competition, the Women's Air Derby during the 1929 National Air Races from Santa Monica, California to Cleveland, Ohio.²⁷ During the first 68-mile leg to San Bernardino, pilot Marvel Crosson's commented, "Get the right road. The [Los Angeles] basin is so confusing with orange groves turning into towns."²⁸ Nineteen female pilots took off that day,²⁹ and 15 made it to Cleveland nine days later.³⁰ At the time, there were only 70 US-licensed women pilots.³¹



Powder Puff Derby pilots, 1929.

During the 1930s, women were often allowed to compete in separate divisions at air meets, but when their times became nearly as good as men's, they were encouraged to hold their own competitions. Any excuse worked: when Florence Klingensmith fatally crashed in a Gee Bee Y during the 1933 Phillips Race in Chicago, women were excluded from the 1934 Bendix Race,³² for their own good, of course.

Brackett Hosts 1974 Ghost Race

In 1947, the Ninety-Nines (a women pilots' organization) launched the first All-Women's International Air Race from Palm Springs to Tampa, Florida that became the best-known Powder Puff Derby.

Brackett Field was set to be the starting point of the 1974 race, but the gasoline crisis caused the race to be cancelled that year. Racing resumed the following year, but the 1977 Powder Puff Derby was the last. Rising fuel and insurance costs, reduced corporate sponsorship, safety issues, and air traffic congestion had brought an end to the Powder Puff Derby.

The Ninety-Nines now operate the Amelia Earhart Birthplace Museum in Atchison, Kansas and the 99s Museum of Women Pilots at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.



Pilot Florence Klingensmith flew a world-record 1,078 loops at Chamberlain Field in Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1931.

And what became of Will Rogers who coined the term Powder Puff Derby? In 1935, he died in a plane crash near Point Barrow, Alaska.

Kingsford-Smith & The Walker Brothers

1935

In 1928, Charles Kingsford-Smith earned global fame when he completed the first trans-Pacific flight from the United States to Australia. He was also first to cross Australia from Australia to London in a record 10.5 days.

In 1932, Kingsford-Smith was knighted for his contributions to aviation.

Harry Walker's Flight

The December 21, 1935 *Progress Bulletin* reported "Summoned east by the critical condition of Will G. Walker, his brother, who is to undergo an operation tomorrow at Holmes hospital [in Cincinnati, Ohio], Harry E. Walker, prominent San Dimas orange grower, left this morning at 4:58 o'clock from the Union Air Terminal, Burbank, with Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith, noted air pilot, in what may develop into an attempt to establish a new transcontinental speed record to New York.

"They were flying in the Lady Southern Cross, low winged Lockheed-Altair monoplane in which Sir Charles and Capt. P.G. Taylor crossed the Pacific recently from Australia to Oakland...."



Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith, first transpacific flyer with the Lady Southern Cross airplane, 1928.

Harry Walker's Flight

The 1935 *Progress Bulletin* continued, "Upon arrival of the plane at Cincinnati, Walker plans to go immediately to his brother's bedside at the hospital and will remain at his former home at Covington, Ky. Just across the Ohio river...."

"Miss Mary Walker, daughter of the San Dimas grower...may fly back to California with Sir Charles as he plans to enjoy Christmas dinner at the Walker home on S. Walnut Street San Dimas...."³³

Missing in Action

In 1935, Kingsford-Smith and his co-pilot Tommy Pethybridge flew the "Lady Southern Cross from Allahbad, India, for Singapore in hopes of setting another record. They disappeared at sea. Their bodies were never recovered. Kingsford-Smith was 38 years old.



Pilot Charles Kingsford-Smith (right) flew H.E. Walker of San Dimas (center) to Cincinnati, Ohio, to visit his brother William G. Walker. Daughter Mary Walker is on the left, 1934.

Mt. San Antonio College Aviation Program

1946

Mt. San Antonio College boasts an extraordinary history of aviation training.³⁴

1946—First courses in airplane construction, operation, and repair were taught at Pomona High School

1947—Charles Booth hired to teach aviation mechanics

1949—Robert Elliott hired to teach aircraft and powerplant courses

1949—Building 22 on campus was completed to house the aviation program

1950—A Piper J-3 Cub was loaned to the program and Temple Avenue used as an airstrip

1952—Students Art Scholl and Trigg Sheetz won the Pacific Coast Inter-Collegiate Airmeet, and Mt. SAC students held the championship for the next five years



Mt. SAC Commercial Pilot and Air Traffic Control student orientation at Brackett Field, August 2014.

Mt. SAC flying team

“In May 1952 two aircraft and powerplant students, Art Scholl and Trigg Sheetz, flew from Brackett Field to Fullerton Airport where they discovered the Pacific Coast Inter-Collegiate Airmeet in progress. After talking their way into entering as representatives of the college, they went on to win first place in every event, bringing the state championship back to the college. The college held this championship for the next five years....”³⁵

The flying team continued until 1973 when they were grounded by the energy crisis, but were back in the air in 1981, with their winning tradition intact. In 2014 at Gillespie Airport in San Diego, the Flying Team won the Top Two-Year College Team Trophy for the 24th consecutive year.



Mt. SAC hangar/office/classroom at Brackett Field, 2014.

1953—Powerplant program was approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

1953—Stuart Angle began an airline stewardess training program

1956—Airframe program was approved by the FAA

1961—Russell Hanson hired to teach jet engine courses

1965—“Classroom in the Sky” began a flying classroom aboard a Boeing 727; program continued until 1982

Mt. SAC Classroom in the Sky

In 1965, the first “Classroom in the Sky” flight took off from Los Angeles International Airport launching an airborne program to study aeronautics, geology, geography, history, and mathematics. History professor James Findley planned the curriculum, Stewart Angle planned and organized the flights, and Captain William Arnott piloted the planes.

Students would study the subject matter first then continue their education on board the plane. Themed topics included:

1967—Alaska or Bust

1968—Windmills, Six Guns, and Barbwire

1970—Astro-Lunar Mission

1971—South of the North Pole

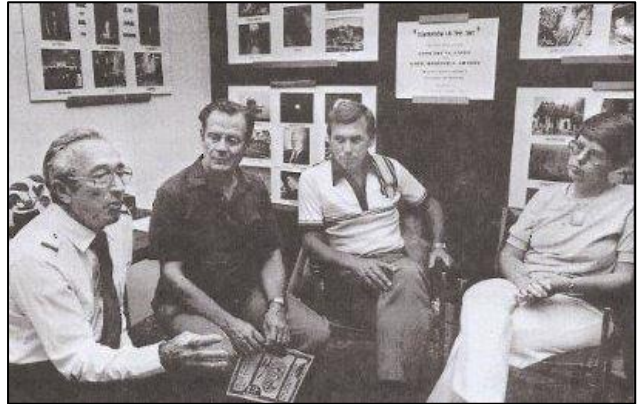
1972—Locks, Bongos, and Pyramids

1973—‘Round the World in 14 days (June 24-July6)

1975—South American Journey, Vuelo de Amistad

1976—Bicentennial America

1982—Cris Travel Adventure



Mt. San Antonio Stewart Angle, Captain Bill Arnott, Ken Park, and Katie Harp launched the Mt. SAC Classroom in the Sky program, 1965.

1966—Majors offered in commercial flight, air transportation, airframe and powerplant mechanics, and airline stewardess

1987—Mt. SAC flying team became the first community college ever to win the Loenig Trophy at the National Intercollegiate Flying Association Airmeet in Carbondale, Illinois

1990—Aviation maintenance program began

1991—7,500 square foot airframe and powerplant facility opened at Brackett Field

1996—Majors offered in air traffic control, commercial flight, flight attendant, and world travel management

2014—The Mt. Sac aviation program at Brackett Field has 250 students enrolled in air traffic control classes, another 250 in commercial pilot courses, and 50 in the flight school



Mt. SAC Classroom in the Sky,
Astro-Lunar Mission—Apollo 12, 1970

F-86 Crash in San Dimas

1956

At 2:30, Sunday afternoon, July 8, 1956, eight-year-old Ken Young was flying a kite on his family's wheat farm between Arrow Highway and the Brackett air field. He recalled, "I heard popping sounds in the sky, looked up, and saw an eastbound F-86 fighter jet emitting puffs of black smoke as it turned north and circled back over San Dimas."³⁶ Then he heard an explosion.

Lt. Oliver Dillingham from Williams Air Force Base in Chandler, Arizona, had crashed his F-86 Sabre Jet in the street in front of the home at 210 West Allen in San Dimas. Residents reported the pilot had maneuvered to "avoid hitting a light plane. People in San Dimas Park said he narrowly avoided landing in the park where many children were playing."³⁷

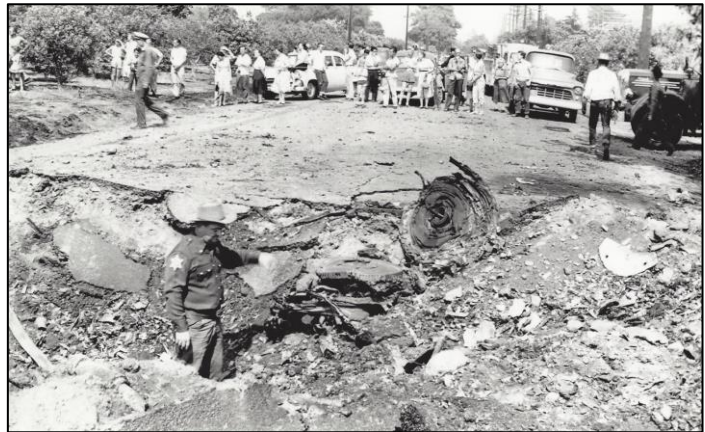
In that era of cold war civil defense preparedness, some residents thought that Russia had dropped an atom or hydrogen bomb. Also, typical of that time before the advent of the National Transportation Safety Board investigated crashes, "Spectators, old and young, were busy gathering souvenirs."³⁸

What had happened? Pieces to the puzzle include the fact the F-86s don't glide under control when they lose power, they just fall. The crash may have avoided a park, but the impact was next to a front yard where 10 children were playing, some of whom received first-degree burns. Although a piece of the airplane was found 200 yards from the main impact, most of the debris was in one spot indicating a straight down descent. He had radioed that he was in trouble, but "some Air Force people seemed to think Dillingham had blacked out and was not in full control of the plane."³⁹ Part of his parachute was found hanging in a tree 75 feet from the point of impact.

The San Dimas Chamber of Commerce passed a Resolution commending Oliver Dillingham for his "heroism in the very highest traditions of the Air Force," praising this type of character in our servicemen, and extending sincere sympathy to his family.



North American F-86 Sabre Jet, 1956.



Original caption: "An F-86 Sabre Jet crashed and exploded on a county road a half mile north of San Dimas today, narrowly missing several homes. The pilot was believed to have been killed, although his body was not recovered. Some of his clothing was found in a nearby palm tree. The plane dug a hole about five feet deep in the middle of the road, knocking down power and telephone lines and cutting a small gas line." 1956.

George Petterson, Brackett's First FBO

1960

December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor Day, six-year-old George Petterson lived under the base leg of the traffic pattern of Alhambra Airport. He became fascinated with the Hudson Bombers, Hellcats, TBM's, and P-38's flying overhead.

He bought his first plane at age 17 for \$500, soloed at 18, received CAA Airframe & Powerplant certification, and went to work for Hycon Aerial Surveys and then joined the army.

In 1960, Los Angeles County took over Brackett Field and Petterson became their first Fixed Base Operator (FBO) provided fuel sales, aircraft maintenance, flight training, aircraft rental, charter service, and hangar storage.

In the early 1972, the County condemned "for public need and necessity" Petterson's FBO leasehold and, though he continued to hangar his aircraft at Brackett, he moved over to the Colorado River, leased land from the Bureau of Land Management and Mohave County, and developed what has Bullhead/Laughlin International Airport. After 13 years he sold that land lease to the eponymous Don Laughlin.

After selling that airport, he moved on to provide aircraft maintenance training for the military forces of Venezuela, Colombia and the Dominican Republic.

Most recently he served as a National Transportation Safety Board investigator. His extensive flying and maintenance experience prepared him well for that role. Today, Petterson spends his days rebuilding a Globe Swift airplane in his hangar at Brackett Field.

Throughout this entire period, Petterson lived in Covina and commuted by air to his operations near Laughlin. In fact, he has been married for 54 years, lived in the same home in Covina for 54 years, and had aircraft housed at Brackett Field for 54 years—an extraordinary trifecta. George Petterson is a Pomona Valley legend.



In 1960, Petterson (left) was Brackett Field's first fixed-base operator. From left: George, Mark Nottingham, County Supervisor Frank Bonelli (for whom Bonelli Park was named), County Engineer John Lambie, Pomona City Councilman Dick Brownell, and County Chief of Aviation Fred Taplan, 1964.



George Petterson rebuilding his Globe Swift airplane at Brackett Field, 2014.

Pictures:

1. Brackett Field with Mt. Baldy in the background, 2014. "Brackett Field Airport." *Los Angeles County Airports*. Los Angeles Department of Public Works, n.d. Web. 4 July 2014. <<http://dpw.lacounty.gov/avi/airports/BrackettField.aspx>>.
2. Cal Roger's Vin Fiz Flyer on his cross-country flight, 1911. "Vin Fiz's Big Bend Landing." Cal Rogers Vin Fiz Flyer. Ed. Lonn Taylor. N.p., 28 Jan. 2011. Web. 5 July 2014. <<http://bigbendnow.com/2011/01/vin-fizs-big-bend-landing/>>.
3. Dedication of the 60-foot tall Cal Rogers Beacon at the Cal Poly Airport, 1928. "Cal Poly Pomona Campus History." *University Library, Cal Poly Pomona*. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 July 2014. <<http://www.csupomona.edu/~library/specialcollections/history/airport.html>>.
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5. Miss Pomona Gail Lindhorst, Pomona Mayor Arthur Cox, and others dedicate Holiday Airways twin-engine *City of Pomona* that made regular flights to Long Beach and Catalina, 1960. King, William F. *Pomona: The Citrus Empire*. Carlsbad, CA: Heritage Media, 2001. P. 103. Print.
6. Golden West commuter plane that connected to Continental Airlines at LAX, 1968. "GWA Twin Otter Landing, 1977." Facebook--Golden West Airlines. N.p., 1 Aug. 2010. Web. 5 July 2014. <<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Golden-West-Airlines/123758517634873>>.
7. *Airport 1975* was one of several movies or television shows shot, in part, at Brackett Field, 1975. "Gloria Swanson Pictures." Fanpix. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 July 2014. <<http://www.fanpix.net/gallery/gloria-swanson-pictures.htm>>.
8. Brackett Field now serves as an aviation safety hub housing aircraft for the Civil Air Patrol, the Pomona Police Department, and the Los Angeles County Fire Department, 2014. "Brackett Field Airport." *Los Angeles County Airports*. Los Angeles Department of Public Works, n.d. Web. 4 July 2014. <<http://dpw.lacounty.gov/avi/airports/BrackettField.aspx>>.
9. Brackett Field Administration Building, 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
10. Numerous aviation related businesses operate in the Brackett Air Business Park on the south side of the airport, 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
11. "Presidential Proclamation -- San Gabriel Mountains National Monument." *wn.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2014. <http://article.wn.com/view/2014/10/15/Presidential_Proclamation_San_Gabriel_Mountains_National_Mon/>.
12. New hangar and flight school constructed along Fairplex Drive on the east side of Brackett Field, 2014. *Brackett Air Business Park*. 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
13. Cal Rogers, Vin Fiz Flyer pilot, first to fly from coast to coast, 1911. "The Epic Flight of the Vin Fiz Flyer." *Aerofiles*. N.p., n.d. Web. 8 July 2014. <<http://www.aerofiles.com/vinfiz.html>>.
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18. Pilot Charles Kingsford-Smith (right) flew H.E. Walker of San Dimas (center) to Cincinnati, Ohio, to visit his brother William G. Walker. Daughter Mary Walker is on the left, 1934. "Noted Flyer Warmly Greeted." *Cincinnati Times-Star* 24 Dec. 1934. Print.
19. Mt. SAC Classroom in the Sky, Astro-Lunar Mission—Apollo 12, 1970. Hall, Barbara Ann, and Odette Marie Pietzch. "Department of Trades and Industries." *Mt. San Antonio College: The First Fifty Years* (1996): P. 81. Print.
20. Mt. San Antonio Stewart Angle, Captain Bill Arnott, Ken Park, and Katie Harp launched the Mt. SAC Classroom in the Sky program, 1965. From the George Petterson Collection, 2014.

21. Mt. SAC Commercial Pilot and Air Traffic Control student orientation at Brackett Field, August 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
22. Mt. SAC hangar/office/classroom at Brackett Field, 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
23. North American F-86 Sabre Jet, 1956. "North American F-86 Sabre jet fighter." Aviation Spectator, n.d. Web. 21 Sept. 2014. <<http://www.aviationspectator.com/image/photos/military-aircraft/warbirds/north-american-f-86-sabre-jet-fighter/north-american-f-86--31>>.
24. Original caption: "An F-86 Sabre Jet crashed and exploded on a county road a half mile north of San Dimas today, narrowly missing several homes. The pilot was believed to have been killed, although his body was not recovered. Some of his clothing was found in a nearby palm tree. The plane dug a hole about five feet deep in the middle of the road, knocking down power and telephone lines and cutting a small gas line." 1956. . "F-86 Sabre Jet Crash in San Dimas." Los Angeles Examiner 8 July 1956. Print.
25. In 1960, Petterson (left) was Brackett Field's first fixed-base operator. From left: George, Mark Nottingham, County Supervisor Frank Bonelli (for whom Bonelli Park was named), County Engineer John Lambie, Pomona City Councilman Dick Brownell, and County Chief of Aviation Fred Taplan, 1964 photo. From the George Petterson collection, 2014.
26. George Petterson rebuilding his Globe Swift airplane at Brackett Field. From the George Petterson collection, 2014.
27. Norm's Hangar Coffee Shop has been run by the same family since 1983, 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
28. Norm's Hangar Coffee Shop, interior view, 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
29. Norm's Hangar Coffee Shop, taxiway view, 2014. McClure Brownie Hawkeye Collection.
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